

Workplace

Most people who are addicted to alcohol or illicit drugs are employed. According to the "2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse," 76 percent of illicit drug users are employed either full- or part-time.¹ More than 60 percent of adults know someone who has reported for work under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.²

Rates for current alcohol use were 59 percent for full-time employed adults aged 18 or older in 2001 compared with 52 percent of their unemployed peers.³ In fact, alcohol is the most widely abused substance among working adults. Most binge (five or more drinks on the same occasion at least once in 30 days) and heavy (five or more drinks on the same occasion on at least five different days in the past 30 days) alcohol users are employed. Among the 43.9 million adult binge drinkers in 2001, 35.4 million (81 percent) were employed either full- or part-time.⁴ Similarly, 9.8 million (80 percent) of the 12.4 million adult heavy drinkers were employed.⁵ These disturbing data underscore the point that all businesses, regardless of their size, may at some point need to deal with an employee who has an alcohol or drug addiction.

Substance abuse in the workplace can cause a myriad of problems for businesses, including increases in absenteeism, on-the-job accidents, errors in judgment, legal expenses, medical insurance claims, and illness rates, and decreases in productivity and employee morale. For example:

- Alcohol and drug abuse has been estimated to cost American businesses roughly \$81 billion in lost productivity in just one year—\$37 billion due to premature death and \$44 billion due to illness.⁶
- Alcoholism is estimated to cause 500 million lost workdays annually.⁷
- Individuals who are current illicit drug users are also more likely (12.9 percent) than those who are not (5 percent) to have skipped one or more work days in the past month.⁸
- Results from a U.S. Postal Service study revealed that employees who tested positive in a pre-employment drug test are 66 percent more likely to be absent and 77 percent more likely to be discharged within three years than those who tested negative.⁹

The good news for employers is that the benefits of achieving an alcohol- and drug-free workplace through substance abuse treatment and recovery for employees are substantial. Results can include improvements in performance, motivation, and morale, increases in overall customer satisfaction, and financial savings through incentive programs offered by insurance carriers. In addition, a commitment to alcohol and drug abuse treatment for employees in need can



"We've had people with breast cancer and no one would ever suggest to us, while they're going through chemo, 'You should just get rid of them.' To say that about alcoholism or an abuse situation makes no sense to us. We can be a voice in the community and say, 'It's time to step up to the plate and do something.'"

—**Diane Crookham-Johnson**
Vice President of Administration
Musco Lighting

help reduce accidents, absenteeism, employee theft and fraud, insurance claims, and workers' compensation costs. Numerous studies have shown that the resources required to support such treatment and recovery programs are well worth the investment. For example, full parity for alcohol and drug treatment services in private health insurance plans that tightly manage care would increase family insurance premiums less than one percent.¹⁰

Making a Difference: What Can I Do?

- 1. Set the Tone.** Demonstrate your company's commitment to operating a drug-free workplace by establishing a comprehensive workplace drug education program, including a drug-free workplace policy, supervisor training, employee education, and employee assistance. There is a wealth of information available to help you get started. Begin by contacting some of the resources listed at the end of this fact sheet. In addition, SAMHSA's Workplace Resource Center provides centralized access to information about drug-free workplaces and related topics at www.drugfreeworkplace.gov. Also consider the Substance Abuse Information Database located at www.dol.gov/asp/programs/drugs/said.htm. It is a one-stop source for businesses seeking information about workplace substance abuse. This site contains hundreds of documents, including sample policies, articles, research reports, training and educational materials, and legal and regulatory information. Another important resource is the Drug-Free Workplace Advisor, an online interactive system containing free, ready-to-use presentation materials for supervisor training and employee education. It can be found on the Internet at www.dol.gov/elaws/drugfree.htm.
- 2. Make It Easy for Your Employees to Get Help.** Smaller businesses cannot always afford to provide in-house resources, but this need not prevent a company from referring its employees to appropriate local organizations and professionals for help in confronting a substance abuse problem, as well as any co-occurring and co-existing conditions such as psychiatric disorders, medical problems, or physical disabilities. Even those with co-occurring substance abuse and mental disorders can return to useful and productive lives. As the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's **Report to Congress on the Prevention and Treatment of Co-occurring Substance Abuse Disorders and Mental Disorders** points out, people with co-occurring disorders can and do recover when they have access to appropriate treatment services.¹¹

Examples of addiction treatment referrals might include certified chemical dependency counselors and therapists, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, or Al-Anon/Alateen. In addition, there are resources available to assist individuals within a particular field. For example, a law firm may refer an addicted attorney to Lawyers Concerned About Lawyers, the ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs, or its bar association's lawyer assistance program.

- 3. Hire Individuals in Recovery.** Many businesses across the nation have worked with substance abuse treatment programs to recruit people in recovery who are highly motivated to succeed and prove themselves and take tremendous pride in their achievements. The National Association on Drug Abuse Problems (NADAP) is a private, nonprofit

organization founded in 1971 to provide individuals the opportunity to become self-sufficient, productive, employed, and free of substance abuse. Nationally acclaimed for its employment programs, curriculum development, counselor training, research studies, and community involvement, NADAP has helped nearly 10,000 men and women recovering from substance abuse problems return successfully to work. Through its effective partnership with business and labor, more than 1,000 companies, including Au Bon Pain, Federal Express, Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Macy's, Omni Park Hotel, Radio Shack, Inc., and Staples, Inc., have hired NADAP applicants. For more information, call 1-800-435-2818 or visit them online at www.nadap.org.

- 4. Provide Inclusive Health Insurance Coverage.** The cost of obtaining treatment for addiction can be prohibitive for many individuals who are in need of these services. In addition, people in recovery who do have health insurance often find that coverage for treatment of their addiction is limited or nonexistent. Demonstrate your commitment to supporting your employees by negotiating with your health insurance company for coverage of behavioral health services, including alcohol and drug abuse treatment and counseling.

Making a Difference: How Can I Focus My Efforts During *Recovery Month*?

Each September, ***Recovery Month*** is observed and celebrated by hundreds of organizations across the country to spotlight the importance of substance abuse treatment. This year's theme is ***"Join the Voices for Recovery: Celebrating Health."*** Your company can make a difference by taking part in outreach efforts to promote and observe ***Recovery Month***. Here are a few ideas to help you begin:

- 1. Educate Your Employees.** The most important audience you can reach with information about substance abuse treatment is your own staff. Provide your employees with basic facts on the signs and symptoms of alcohol and drug addiction, treatment options, and the company's policy in supporting employees in recovery. Information about ***Recovery Month*** can be delivered through a variety of communication vehicles, including interoffice newsletters, electronic mail messages, an internal or "intranet" web site, paycheck inserts, or bulletin boards in common areas throughout the office.
- 2. Contribute to Local Efforts.** An important way for your business to demonstrate its corporate citizenship during ***Recovery Month*** is to support a local substance abuse treatment organization. Make a financial donation, organize a group of employees to volunteer their time, sponsor a ***Recovery Month*** educational or publicity event, or offer pro bono company services to a local treatment provider.
- 3. Go Public about Your Program.** Write and distribute a press release to the local media about your company's drug education program and ***Recovery Month*** activities. Or byline a news article for placement in a business publication expressing your opinion about the extent of the problem of substance abuse and what can be done about it. Support your position with relevant statistics or scientific study results, personal anecdotes, or references to recent news events.

4. **Evaluate Your Efforts.** Survey your employees to obtain feedback on your company's workplace drug education program and determine what elements are not effective. Ensure your staff of the confidentiality of their responses, and use the findings to make decisions regarding any modifications to the program.

You are encouraged to share your plans and activities for *Recovery Month 2003* with SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, your colleagues, and the general public by posting them on the official *Recovery Month* web site at <http://www.recoverymonth.gov>.

We would like to know about your efforts during *Recovery Month*. Please complete the Customer Satisfaction Form enclosed in the kit. Directions are included on the form.

For any additional *Recovery Month* materials visit our web site at <http://www.recoverymonth.gov> or call 1-800-729-6686.

Additional Resources

Federal Agencies

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES (HHS)

200 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20201

877-696-6775 (Toll-Free)

www.hhs.gov

HHS, Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

5600 Fishers Lane

Parklawn Building, Suite 13C-05

Rockville, MD 20857

301-443-8956

www.samhsa.gov

HHS, SAMHSA

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol
and Drug Information

P.O. Box 2345

Rockville, MD 20847-2345

800-729-6686 (Toll-Free)

800-487-4889 (TDD) (Toll-Free)

877-767-8432 (Spanish) (Toll-Free)

www.ncadi.samhsa.gov

HHS, SAMHSA

National Directory of Drug Abuse
and Alcoholism Treatment Programs

www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

SAMHSA National Helpline

800-662-HELP (800-662-4357) (Toll-Free)

800-487-4889 (TDD) (Toll-Free)

877-767-8432 (Spanish) (Toll-Free)

(for confidential information on substance
abuse treatment and referral)

www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

HHS, SAMHSA

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

5600 Fishers Lane

Rockwall II

Rockville, MD 20857

301-443-5052

www.samhsa.gov

HHS, SAMHSA

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention

Workplace Helpline

800-967-5752 (Toll-Free)

www.samhsa.gov

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES (HHS)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

9000 Rockville Pike

Bethesda, MD 20892

301-496-4000

www.nih.gov

HHS, NIH

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and
Alcoholism

Willco Building

6000 Executive Boulevard

Bethesda, MD 20892-7003

301-443-3860

www.niaaa.nih.gov

HHS, NIH

National Institute on Drug Abuse

Office of Science Policy and Communication

6001 Executive Boulevard

Room 5213 MSC 9561

Bethesda, MD 20892-9561

301-443-1124

Telefax fact sheets: 888-NIH-NIDA (Voice) (Toll-Free)

or 888-TTY-NIDA (TTY) (Toll-Free)

www.drugabuse.gov

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN
SERVICES (HHS)

Office of Minority Health Resource Center
P.O. Box 37337
Washington, DC 20013-7337
800-444-6472 (Toll-Free)
301-230-7199 (TDD)
www.omhrc.gov

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
White House Office of National Drug Control
Policy

Drug-Free Workplace Programs Information
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000
800-666-3332 (Toll-Free)
www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL)

200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210
866-4-USA-DOL (Toll-Free)
www.dol.gov

DOL, Working Partners for an Alcohol- and
Drug-Free Workplace
200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S-2312
Washington, DC 20210
202-693-5959
www.dol.gov/dol/workingpartners.htm
www.dol.gov/asp/programs/drugs/party/party.htm

Other Resources

Al-Anon/Alateen
For Families and Friends of Alcoholics
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
888-4AL-ANON/888-425-2666 (Toll-Free)
www.al-anon.alateen.org

Alcoholics Anonymous
475 Riverside Drive, 11th Floor
New York, NY 10115
212-870-3400
www.aa.org

Employee Assistance Professionals Association
2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 500
Arlington, VA 22201-3062
703-522-6272
www.eapassn.org

Employee Assistance Society of North America
230 East Ohio Street, Suite 500
Chicago, IL 60611-4607
312-644-0828
www.easna.org

Institute for a Drug-Free Workplace
1225 I Street, NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20005
202-842-7400
www.drugfreeworkplace.org

National Association on Drug Abuse Problems, Inc.
355 Lexington Avenue, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10017
212-986-1170
www.nadap.org

National Drug-Free Workplace Alliance
6868 S. Plumer
Tucson, AZ 85706
877-817-6809

Partnership for a Drug-Free America
405 Lexington Avenue, Suite 1601
New York, NY 10174
212-922-1560
www.drugfreeamerica.org

Sources

- ¹ *Summary of Findings from the 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*. DHHS Publication No. (SMA) 02- 3758. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2002.
- ² *Addiction in the Workplace Survey*. Center City, MN: Hazeldon Foundation, 1996.
- ³ *Summary of Findings from the 2001 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*.
- ⁴ *ibid.*
- ⁵ *ibid.*
- ⁶ *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Statistics Sourcebook*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 1995.
- ⁷ *Treatment Is the Answer: A White Paper on the Cost-Effectiveness of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency Treatment*. Laguna Hills, CA: National Association of Treatment Providers, 1991.
- ⁸ *Worker Drug Use and Workplace Policies and Programs: Results from the 1994 and 1997 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 1999.
- ⁹ Maloney, J., Normand, J., and Salyards, S. An Evaluation of Pre-Employment Drug Testing. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(6), 1990.
- ¹⁰ *The Costs and Effects of Parity for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Insurance Benefits*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance and Mental Health Services Administration, 1998.
- ¹¹ *Report to Congress on the Prevention and Treatment of Co-occurring Substance Abuse Disorders and Mental Disorders*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2002.